

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-06

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CEA-01 CIAE-00 CIEP-01 DODE-00 FPC-01 H-02 INR-07

INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-03 USIA-06

SAM-01 OES-03 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 FRB-03 /088 R

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TO AMEMBASSY LAGOS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, OVIP, NI

SUBJECT: MINISTRY OF MINES AND POWER PERMSEC ASIODU

REF: LAGOS 5332

BEGIN SUMMARY: MINISTRY OF MINES AND POWER PERMANENT SECRETARY ASIODU APPEARED AS SCHEDULED AT JUNE 17 LUNCHEON MEETING OF NIGERIAN-AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN NEW YORK. INFORMATION ABOUT HIS OTHER ACTIVITIES HAS ELUDED MOST ENQUIRERS, INCLUDING OCCIDENTAL. ASIODU'S NEW YORK SPEECH CALLED FOR PARTNERSHIP IN NIGERIA'S DEVELOPMENT, BUT ALSO CRITICIZED U.S. ATTITUDES TOWARDS OIL PRICES. END SUMMARY.

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1. DEPARTMENT, ALONG WITH OCCIDENTAL AND PROBABLY OTHER

U.S. FIRMS, HAS SOUGHT UNSUCCESSFULLY DETAILS ON ASIODU'S ACTIVITIES IN U.S. NIGERIAN EMBASSY AND CONSULATE PERSONNEL HAVE PLEADED IGNORANCE; AND NIGERIAN-AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S WEINSTEIN CLAIMS HE UNDER STRICT ORDERS NOT TO REVEAL ASIODU'S ITINERARY. OCCIDENTAL'S OFFICE HERE INFORMS THEY UNABLE CONTACT HIM IN COLORADO OR ELSEWHERE AND UNABLE CONFIRM HIS ATTENDANCE OR PARTICIPATION AT ANY CONFERENCE IN DENVER. CONSEQUENTLY, TRIP MENTIONED REFTEL DID NOT OCCUR.

2. ASIODU, IN HIS JUNE 17 SPEECH, AIMED OSTENSIBLY TO IDENTIFY POTENTIAL AREAS FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN U.S. AND NIGERIA IN EXECUTION OF THIRD PLAN. HOWEVER, HE ALSO CRITICIZED QUOTE ATTITUDES PREVALENT IN THE U.S. TOWARDS THE OIL PRICE QUESTION AND THE SO-CALLED ENERGY CRISIS UNQUOTE, AND REITERATED ARGUMENTS FOR HIGH OIL PRICES FIRST HEARD IN KADUNA APPEARANCE. DESPITE DISAGREEMENTS OVER ENERGY COSTS, ASIODU SAID, THE SHIFT IN WORLD FINANCIAL RESOURCES HAS CREATED NEW QUOTE MUTUALLY PROFITABLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN AMERICAN BUSINESS AND NIGERIA FOR TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND FOR EXPANDING TRADE. UNQUOTE.

3. ASIODU ASSERTED THAT SIX TYPES OF DIFFICULTIES HAD HINDERED IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SECOND PLAN; DELAYS IN PROJECT STUDIES; BITTER COMPETITION AMONG FOREIGN CONSULTANTS AND PROMOTERS; WRONG CHOICES OF TECHNOLOGY; WRONG LOCATION DECISIONS; FAILURE TO FORESEE TRAINED MANPOWER NEEDS; LOW PRODUCTIVITY OF LOCAL INDUSTRIES. HE CALLED ON THE U.S. TO HELP SOLVE THESE PROBLEMS BY DEVELOPING NEW ECONOMIC POLICIES AND LEGISLATION (E.G., TO PROVIDE GUARANTEED MARKETS FOR PROCESSED GOODS), AND BY ADOPTING A BOLD TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER PROGRAM. IN CLOSING ASIODU, DEPARTING FROM PREPARED TEXT, EXPRESSED HOPE THAT THROUGH DIALOGUE OPPORTUNITY WILL BE SEIZED TO CREATE QUOTE EXPANDING CIRCLES OF PROSPERITY. UNQUOTE.

4. LUNCHEON WAS ATTENDED BY SOME 170 PERSONS, MOSTLY FROM BANKING AND PETROLEUM SECTORS. ALSO IN ATTENDANCE WERE S. O. ASABIA OF STANDARD BANK NIGERIA, GIL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HACHADOORIAN OF COMMERCE'S NEW YORK FIELD OFFICE, AND ASSISTANT STATE DESKOFF. COPY OF SPEECH AND LIST OF PARTICIPANTS BEING POUCHED.

5. COMMENT: EXACT PURPOSE OF ASIODU'S U.S. VISIT REMAINS MYSTERY. HOWEVER, HIS INTELLECTUAL CAPACITY AND POWER TO ATTRACT INTEREST OF U.S. BUSINESS WERE IMPRESSIVELY DEMONSTRATED IN NEW YORK. WHILE MESSAGE

OF NIGERIA'S DESIRE AND PERHAPS PREFERENCE FOR U.S.
INVESTMENT WAS CLEARLY TRANSMITTED, NIGERIA'S PRE-
REQUISITES FOR SUCH INVESTMENT ALSO WERE EFFECTIVELY
SIGNALLED.

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